

Diversity and Civil Rights

Fiscal Year 1999 Annual Report Region 3



Program Description and Mission

The Office for Diversity and Civil Rights Programs is responsible for ensuring that equal opportunity exists for employees, job applicants, and visitors. Four program areas fall under the “umbrella” of Equal Opportunity: 1) Affirmative Employment; 2) Special Emphasis; 3) Discrimination; and 4) the Federally Assisted and Conducted Programs.

The purpose of affirmative employment is to achieve a work force that “mirrors” the nation’s diverse population. Efforts in this area include reaching out to groups of people who are under-represented in our workforce: people with disabilities, diverse people, and women.

Special Emphasis Program Managers assist managers in assuring that equal opportunity is present in all aspects of employment and that affirmative action is being taken to address any under-representation. Special Emphasis Program Managers provide Cultural Awareness Forums at two (2) locations annually to provide awareness to employees of various cultures in our society and serve as advisors for their targeted groups.

The Discrimination Program provides an avenue for employees and job applicants who believe they experienced discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or reprisal in an employment matter to attempt resolution of the matter.

The Federally Assisted Program and the Federally Conducted Program enforce laws to ensure that state and federal programs, activities, and facilities are accessible to all people-including people with disabilities.

Summary of Fiscal Year 1999 Accomplishments

DCR staff collaborated with a national team in the development of twenty-five guidelines to address accessibility of the Service's outdoor recreation programs, activities and facilities. Two members of the Regional Accessibility Team developed eighty-five (85) accessibility checklists designed to assist program managers in evaluating the accessibility of their programs, activities and facilities. They also worked with a vendor to develop an Accessibility Tracking System that will track, monitor, and report on accessibility compliance of Service facilities.

The Region's two EEO Counselors provided timely assistance to employees and applicants who believed they were denied benefits or opportunities because of discrimination. The EEO Counselors used alternate dispute resolution techniques and the expedited process to help resolve complaints.

The Office for Diversity and Civil Rights used the Upward Mobility program to provide a career-ladder opportunity for a Native American EEO Specialist.

DCR worked with Region 3 field stations and offices were required to design and implement station outreach plans. Each outreach plan lists projected vacancies, identifies one to three colleges/universities, organizations or communities for station outreach the building of relationships to provide diverse candidates for employment with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These outreach plans are used to guide and evaluate diversity outreach efforts.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2000

The Office for Diversity and Civil Rights Programs will:

Highlight and review regional progress towards meeting the diversity goals established in the Service's Vision for Diversity. Statistics will be given to selecting officials monthly documenting opportunities and progress towards meeting the goals.

Provide technical assistance to supervisors and managers to implement outreach plans. Coordinate with the Program Supervisors to ensure that there is no duplication of outreach efforts among field stations. Support partnerships with tribal colleges and universities, historical Black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, and other institutions of higher education.

Support the Student Career Experience, the Student Temporary Employment, and the Career Awareness Institute programs as major resources for increasing diversity in the Service.

Provide a quality and timely EEO informal complaint program and establish a regional mediation process.

Provide technical assistance and guidance to program accessibility coordinators and monitor Regional station accessibility reviews to ensure that all stations are reviewed.

Establish Intranet as a major communication tool for DCR resources and reporting.